(At this stage some hon. Members left the Chamber.)

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): Sir, it is wrong on the part of the Opposition Party to stage a walkout against the observation made by the Chair (*Interruptions*). They have staged a walkout against the observation of the Chair. It is very unhealthy.

श्री सभापति: आप इसकी चिंता छोड़िए। मैं देख लूंगा। ...(व्यवधान)...

प्रो॰ राम देव भंडारी: इनको संविधान में विश्वास नहीं है। ...(व्यवधान)...

DR. K. MALAISAMY: Sir, before going to the next question, kindly allow me to put my question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, that question has been postponed. Now Q. No. 84.

*84. [*The questioner (SHRI SURESH BHARDWAJ) was absent for answer vide page 30.*]

*85. [*The questioner (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD) was absent for answer vide page 31.*]

Schemes for tribals in Kerala

*86. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the media reports about the misery of tribals in Kerala;

(b) if so, the action taken in this regard;

(c) whether any study or steps have been initiated to prevent depletion of the bio-diversity in the region; and

(d) if so, whether any schemes have been initiated to provide land and work for the jobless tribals of Wayanad district of Kerala?

THE MINISTER OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRI P. R. KYNDIAH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. This Ministry has advised the State Government to take all necessary steps to redress the miseries of tribals in Kerala.

(c) The programmes/schemes undertaken by the State Forest Department and Ministry of Environment and Forests aim towards prevention of depletion of the bio-diversity.

(d) The Ministry has already advised the State Government to provide land to the landless tribals, if necessary by purchasing land from private owners, from TSP and other funds. The Ministry of Environment and Forests have also accorded approval in February, 2004 for diversion of 7693.22 hectares of forest land for resettlement of landless tribals in the State under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, subject to payment of Net Present Value of the diverted forest land.

SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Sir, it is an important issue related to the tribals in Kerala, and, there was a police firing as well on tribals. Then, the State Government had requested for land for distribution to these tribals. And, whatever land has been allotted now is totally inadequate. Therefore, I would like to know from the hon. Minister: Are you going to provide more land for the State? What is the demand from the State? And, when are you going to distribute the forest land for the tribals?

SHRI P. R. KYNDIAH: Sir, on this question, the State Government has been advised to purchase land from private and other parties as well, if so required, and the tribals from this area could be accommodated through the funds to be provided from the Sub-tribal Plan ...(*Interruptions*) It is to be provided...

SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will you provide money for the States?

SHRI P. R. KYNDIAH: I will tell you. The point is that according to the information that we have received, the State Government had to be provided land to the total extent of 2,558.58 acres for distribution to tribals. This will include families in Kollam, Idukki, Kottayam, Alappuzha, Ernakulam, Kozhikode, Kannur and Wayanad districts. The State Government has also decided to distribute 7,121.547 acres of land. This is the present position.

SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Sir, the Minister is new to the Ministry. But the problem is still there. Actually, you have to look into it seriously because it is a very serious problem. There was a police firing. What has been done so far is totally inadequate. So, you have to look into this issue. You should not advise the States because this is a very serious issue in which Centre is also involved. While going through the reply, I find that the Centre is not taking any initiative for resolving this issue. They are just shifting the responsibility on to the shoulders of the State. The State cannot do it on its own. Naturally, you have to help them. Otherwise, you have to consult the States and provide assistance to them.

Secondly, in this particular area, that is, the Wayanad district where we have 70 per cent of the tribal population, so also 80 per cent of the total tribals in the State have their own problems. That means there is malnutrition in a particular area and suicides are going on. There are press reportings on this. With regard to Wayanad district, I would like to know whether you will provide a pilot programme for the tribals which would provide employment and other facilities. Such a proposal is there from the State. Will you consider this proposal?

SHRI P. R. KYNDIAH: Here, the issue is two-fold. One is the question of restoration of tribal land. The other is the transfer of land which is linked with this issue. Let us clearly understand this. These are the two main issues we are discussing. So far as the Wayanad district is concerned, the forest area diverted so far, according to my information, is 3,008.20 hectares. Now, once the tribals are given land, then, automatically, the question of providing employment comes up. But to provide jobs to the jobless tribals is a different issue altogether. So, this is a matter we are looking into.

SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Because of malnutrition, children are suffering. There are cases of unknown diseases, etc.

SHRI P. R. KYNDIAH: The point is, the first and foremost thing is that we have to provide land. This is most important. Secondly, we have to provide jobs. My view is this. Once land is provided to the tribals whose land has been taken away, that itself will be a step ahead for them and they will get employment out of it. This is No. 1. So far as the jobless tribals are concerned, this is a matter to be studied, and we will look into it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is enough. Now, Shri Vayalar Ravi.

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Sir, the tribals living in Kerala and in other parts of the country leave their property in the forests. The Government of India has enacted the Forests Conservation Act which prevents the State Governments from taking any initiative to provide land to the tribals. It has become a very serious issue for different States of the country. On that background, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government would review the Forests Conservation Act—I am not asking for the repeal of this Act—and see to it to what extent the Central Government could help the State Governments in distributing land to the tribals.

SHRI P. R. KYNDIAH: Sir, we are as concerned as the hon. Member is about the problem of distribution of land among the tribals. That is why we have given a clear advice to the State Government that the Kerala

Scheduled Tribes Section of Transfer of Land and Restoration of Alienated Land Act of 1975 should be the core Act upon which the State Government should try to solve the land issue of tribals. This is the main thing. Once we are able to restore the land which was so taken away earlier, that itself will be a big step. The second point is that there are restrictions on the alienation of land by the tribals.

Special grant to colleges

*87. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the University Grants Commission has chalked out a scheme to give special grant to the colleges showing good performance to enable them to achieve higher standards;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether such colleges have since been identified; and

(d) if so, the details thereof, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Statement

The University Grants Commission (UGC) approved a scheme in June, 2003 to identify "Colleges with potential for Excellence". The Scheme envisages special financial assistance to identified colleges of various categories during the Tenth Plan as per the following norms:

— Non-autonomous/not-accredited by NAAC — upto Rs. 35.00 lakhs

— Autonomous and not-accredited colleges or *vice-versa* — upto Rs. 60.00 lakhs

— Autonomous and accredited colleges — upto Rs. 100.00 lakhs

The financial assistance could be used in the form of grant-in-aid by the identified colleges to improve their academic and physical infrastructure, develop innovations in teaching, adopt modern methods of learning and evaluation and introduce a flexible approach in the selection of courses. The UGC is engaged in identifying such colleges from among the 239 proposals received by the Commission.